



**House Health Policy Committee – Written Comments**  
**January 26, 2012**

Chairwoman Haines, Rep. Poleski and Members of the House Health Policy Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on House Bill 4862 and 4863, which essentially removes the Substance Abuse Coordinating Agencies from local public health control and places the service responsibility with the local Community Mental Health Service Provider. While we share the goal to improve the health of our community, the bill as it stands will not improve the health of Oakland County citizens or the efficiency of our service delivery system.

My name is Jeffrey L. Brown. I am the Executive Director of Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority. Together with my partner Coordinating Agency, Oakland County Office of Substance Abuse Services, we are responsible to effectively and efficiently serve the portion of Oakland County's 1.2 million people who need public mental health/substance abuse services and supports.

We are partners contractually and collaborative community partners addressing community safety net needs (emergency preparedness, housing, jail diversion, co-occurring courts, etc.). We are partners in creating community solutions for unmet needs. We are partners in the newly created Oakland Integrated Health Care Network, which brings integrated health homes to service locations throughout Oakland County. Integrated health homes integrate mental health services, substance abuse services and family practice medicine through contracts and many different funding sources.

In 2012, we expect the number of Oakland County citizens served to exceed 25,000. The number of people served has steadily increased since 2004. Most dramatic increases came in 2007-2010 when our community was significantly impacted by the deteriorating economy.

There are a few more facts that are important as you deliberate this bill and our input. OCCMHA is the second largest PIHP (Medicaid); OCCMHA is the second largest CMHSP (General Fund). OCCMHA became an Authority in 1999. OSAS remains part of the Oakland County Department of Human Services. OCCMHA provides no direct services but contracts and continuously monitors services and supports with an extensive electronically connected network of non-profit organizations throughout the community. Together we serve increasing numbers, achieve exceptional outcomes and have the lowest administration percentages in the state.

These are local service delivery solutions. Structure and services are prioritized locally to meet local needs. A combination of local, state and federal funds is used effectively and efficiently to address the breadth and depth of community need. Statewide, we share the struggles with inadequate funding, decreasing funding, inconsistent funding, increasing administrative requirements and funding tied to very specific priority populations.

Our effectiveness is directly related to our interdependent/collaborative roles in service to our diverse community. We have proposed language that we believe will deliver the intended legislative outcomes and strengthen local efficient and effective service delivery systems.

From our perspective, we believe integration of mental health substance abuse and physical health, leads to necessary improvements in the health of the people we serve. Consolidation of funding will not create this. However, purposeful mission based collaborative local partnerships will.

We believe current funding streams and support for SUD services should not be eroded by consolidation and integration efforts. The service impact of inadequate funding and decreasing funding will be compounded by consolidation of funding.

We believe administrative efficiencies are not achieved by consolidation of funding alone. Purposeful mission based collaborative partnerships that focus on the elimination of administrative redundancies, inconsistencies and processes that do not contribute to outcome.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration of our feedback.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeffrey L. Brown  
Executive Director